

創作能『不来子先生』批評

Blyth Sensei Commentary

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『不来子先生』は、前場にワキがブライス先生の墓に案内され、後場にシテとしてブライス先生の霊が登場する創作能である。アイ狂言はなく、尺八の演奏が行われた。この能は私にとって初めて創作能を鑑賞する機会であった。まず驚いたのは、現代の日本語で演じられていたということ。そのためか、謡を聞くことよりも詞章の意味内容が印象的であった。ブライスおよびソローの思想について語られるのを聞き、猿楽の能が昔寺社などで仏教の思想や功德を伝える唱導劇の役割をも担っていたことを思い出させた。また、能の詞章に俳句が用いられていることも大変新鮮な体験だった。歌舞中心の世阿弥の能に捉われず、複式夢幻能の方法を効果的に取り入れながら、俳句やシェイクスピアの技法なども用い思想内容を伝達することに魅力を感じた。

Blyth Sensei is a modern Noh play written by Professor Munakata. As a student of Japanese literature and theater, I have been studying traditional and classical works of Noh. However, I never had the chance to see a modern work of Noh, and therefore I would like to write some of my impressions and thoughts upon seeing *Blyth Sensei*.

Noh is known to have been developed by father and son, Kan'ami and Zeami. The father Kan'ami had been a genius in terms of drama skills and thus marveled his contemporary audience with beautiful acting, especially of women. Kan'ami had added drama and depth into already existing plays, while also being a very fine dancer. Although it was his son Zeami whom developed on the dance, by which Noh became more aesthetically pleasing to both the eyes and ears, as well as writing many plays based on classical literature. The later generations would depart from Zeami to aspire more to realism and drama or sought more novel expressions and themes to explore. But it is nevertheless sure that Zeami had created the foundation for Noh as a tradition.

Now in the 21st century, Prof. Munakata's modern Noh, *Blyth sensei* is distinguishing in many ways. He has incorporated English phrases into the chorus and has inserted haiku instead of waka into the soliloquy. The most prominent character of modern Noh which differentiates itself from the classical, is that the lines are written in modern Japanese and thus a contemporary Japanese person

would not only easily understand the phrases but also comprehend each syllable. This may give the audience an impression of hearing a Kyogen, (a conversational play) where the lines are heard so clearly that the musical and theatrical aspect subside momentarily. This impression of conversation was quite surprising for the first part, when the characters were merely arriving at the scene and explaining their situation. This non-musical and non-theatrical feature may be something to criticize if we are to base our judgements on Zeami's *Yugen* theory of beauty. However, we must not limit the possibilities and potential of Noh art simply by revering Zeami. Prof. Munakata gave philosophical meaning to his play by exploring the ideas of Thoreau and Blyth. This educative aspect is found in the most archaic forms of Noh; when Noh was performed in temples to convey the virtues of religion and tell stories of salvation. In this sense, *Blyth Sensei* is rich in philosophical conversation and exploration, reminiscent of the original use of Noh art. The lines written by Prof. Munakata are thought provoking and very pleasurable, enriched with a profound knowledge of haiku, and contains an educational message impregnated by Blyth sensei about the virtues of Zen, the ideals of Thoreau and greatness of Basho's poetry.

We must also commend the artistic and professional interpretation of Noh conducted by Noh actor Tsumura Reijiro. A dance of Noh accompanied by lines of Basho's haiku is such a novel experience. The spirit of Blyth even performs a certain soliloquy resembling techniques of Shakespeare. To conclude, I believe Prof. Munakata has conveyed profound meaning about the ideals and philosophy of Thoreau and Blyth and has successfully done so because of the use of Noh tradition and arts. There are many more aspects of this play to explore but doing so will exceed the expectations of mere impression-commentary and so I will end my writing here.

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(学習院大学文学部日本語日本文学科三年)